



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 7 September 1967



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DAILY BRIEF
7 SEPTEMBER 1967

1. South Vietnam

As defeated presidential candidates continue to insist the election was rigged, runner-up Truong Dinh Dzu claims he is going to organize a civilian opposition party. Yesterday Dzu also repeated his call for negotiations with the Communists.

Lower house elections are scheduled for 22 October and some 1,500 candidates have filed for the 137 seats at stake.

2. Communist China -
North Vietnam

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3. Latin America

The ministerial meeting of the Latin American Free Trade Association ended last Saturday after accomplishing nothing. Last minute objections by Peru scuttled a proposal for gradual elimination of tariffs against products of less developed countries. No agreement was reached on an automatic tariff cutting mechanism, and there was no real progress toward setting up a common market.

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4. Congo

The mercenaries are making threatening noises about leaving Bukavu for Goma, to the north, where there is a good airfield. Once there, they could either leave the Congo or await reinforcements from Angola. We cannot confirm any movement toward Goma

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Mobutu, feverishly hosting the Organization of African Unity conference, seems to have put the mercenaries out of mind for the moment.

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5. Nonproliferation Treaty

The Soviets have backed down from their insistence that the International Atomic Energy Agency be the sole administrator of any safeguards provision. A compromise Soviet proposal would permit the Common Market countries, which have their own safeguards system, to take up to two years to negotiate with the International Agency to determine how safeguards would apply. These countries could negotiate individually, or as a group.

The Common Market countries, while welcoming the concession, are likely to respond cautiously. France might torpedo the idea of any negotiations with the International Agency.

The Soviets are also saying that the problem of security guarantees to nonnuclear powers "would not be a difficult issue between the US and USSR."

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6. Cambodia

Sihanouk, in another jab at Cambodian leftists, has dissolved the Cambodian-Chinese Friendship Association--a noted tool of his Peking-leaning leftists. This action, however, (like other recent "crackdowns" on the left) was done in a way calculated to keep Peking from getting too worked up.

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SPECIAL DAILY REPORT ON NORTH VIETNAM
FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

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Hanoi on elections: North Vietnamese propaganda media continue to charge the elections were fraudulent, but a note of sensitivity to the large turnout of voters can be detected.

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Schoenbrun pessimistic: Ex-CBS newsman David Schoenbrun touched down in Vientiane, Laos, Tuesday evening after a two-week visit to Hanoi. Schoenbrun was described by US Embassy officers as disillusioned and deeply depressed about the prospects for peace.

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Schoenbrun spoke of the "unswerving determination" of the leadership in Hanoi, the "inflexibility" of its terms for peace and negotiations, and the "remarkable organization and morale" of the people in the north. He was especially struck by the energy and morale of the people he observed on trips outside Hanoi, saying this was unlike anything he had seen before as a war correspondent.

During his visit, Schoenbrun had a two-and-a-quarter hour interview with Premier Pham Van Dong and shook hands with Ho Chi Minh. Schoenbrun found nothing new in Hanoi's peace terms and held out no hopes for any immediate settlement through negotiations.

Schoenbrun Talks with US Prisoners: Schoenbrun was allowed to visit five American prisoners being held in a villa near the main Red River bridge in Hanoi. He thought four of them were in "fairly good" physical and mental condition, were treated and cared for as well as possible, and showed no evidence of brainwashing. One, who was severely wounded when captured, said he had been immediately taken to a hospital and nursed back to complete health. Some of the prisoners had received mail and even packages sent through open international mail. Schoenbrun said the North Vietnamese argued that the prisoners are a burden to them--they eat twice as much as any Vietnamese, and the authorities are concerned they may be killed by US bombings.

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